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CIA Psychological Profile Kadafi as Insecu

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WASHINGTON—The Central Intelligence Agency has prepared a new psychological profile of Libyan leader Moammar Kadafi that depicts him as more dangerous than ever in the wake of publicity over his purported plot to kill President Reagan and others, The Times has learned.

The updated profile, part of the series of such assessments that the CIA maintains on most major foreign officials, portrays Kadafi as an insecure leader. "I don't expect him to react rationally to the frustration" of having the alleged scheme disclosed, one knowledgeable source said.

Some high-level government intelligence officials have expressed doubts about details of the plot reports and have contended that the imminence of an assassination attempt has been exaggerated. But the CIA profile portrays Kadafi as an insecure leader capable of sponsoring such a plot. One specialist described Kadafi as having a "toxic psyche."

Important Tools

Psychological profiles, which seek to gauge the instabilities, quirks and other personal qualities of foreign leaders, are regarded in the government as important tools for the President and other policy-makers to use in evaluating foreign leaders' personalities and likely reactions to future events.

As such, the profiles can exert an indirect but significant influence on presidential decisions and future U.S. actions.

A CIA spokesman refused to comment on the new Kadafi profile.

Experts involved in trying to predict the Libyan leader's moves, however, said that while they consider him more dangerous than before, they are not sure what his specific response to U.S. accusations about the plot will be. He could intensify his alleged efforts to carry out the assassinations, these U.S. officials said, or he might decide to strike elsewhere—"like blow up half of Tel Aviv," as one official put it. Other officials said that he might be influenced to call off the alleged plot.

Although the CIA's psychological profiles are almost never made public, they have played influential roles over the years. Presidents routinely review them before meeting with foreign leaders. Former President Jimmy Carter, for example, studied CIA-prepared profiles of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat before meeting with them at Camp David.

Since Presidents and other senior U.S. officials often have had little direct personal experience with individual foreign leaders, the psychological profiles can be an important influence in shaping their attitudes and preconceptions about such leaders.

for the Office of Strategic Services, the precursor of the CIA. Some authorities say its insights into Hitler's personality helped persuade Allied leaders to demand "unconditional surrender" of the Axis powers.

Today, profiles are considered a particularly useful tool in preparing a U.S. President for negotiations with a foreign leader. Although the profiles are not viewed as a panacea, it is "unthinkable," one authority said, that a President would go to a major summit meeting without having read his opposite number's profile.

The profiles range from 100 to 1,000 pages in length and include information of a biographical-historical nature as well as analytical assessments that attempt to predict how individuals would react under pressure and in times of crisis.

Meanwhile, new details of the Secret Service's debriefing of the informant who was the U.S. government's major source on the existence of the Libyan assassination plot have emerged. It was learned that the Secret Service, after extensive questioning, abandoned its strong early skepticism of the informant and decided that he was "credible."

"Everything that could be done to establish his credibility was done, and he has to be regarded as credible," an official said. Steps included administering lie-detector examinations, he added.

"On the core information, he stood up well," the official said, though certain tangential details did not check out.